

# Personal Appearance Standards

## 1028.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

In order to project uniformity and neutrality toward the public and other members of the Department, members shall maintain their personal hygiene and appearance to project a professional image appropriate for this department and for their assignment.

The procedures contained herein are intended to promote uniformity of the members of the Department by addressing specific grooming items. However, nothing herein shall limit the department's ability to address any other grooming or personal appearance deemed improper for members of the Department.

## 1028.2 POLICY

Members of the Santa Clara Fire Department, while in uniform, represent the City of Santa Clara as well as the department. This directive shall apply to all members while wearing any part of the uniform as listed in The Santa Clara Fire Department Uniform Policy.

This policy establishes the standard for personal appearance and grooming for uniformed personnel. It recognizes safety concerns as well as physical differences in uniformed personnel while maintaining the high professional image of the Santa Clara Fire Department.

While on duty, members of the department shall be neat, clean, and maintain a professional appearance at all times. Uniforms shall be clean, properly maintained, and comply with specifications as outlined in the Uniform Policy. All personnel shall comply with the grooming standards as outlined in this directive.

Those who do not comply shall be directed to do so, by their immediate supervisor, prior to assumption of on-duty status.

Conditions cannot be allowed to develop which would jeopardize personal safety or the safety of others.

Adherence to the letter of this policy does not preclude officers requiring adjustments or modifications when, in their judgment, a safety hazard or recurring grooming problem exists.

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#### **1028.3 GROOMING STANDARDS**

The following appearance standards shall apply to all members except those whose current assignment would deem them not appropriate or where the Fire Chief or the authorized designee has granted an exception.

##### **1028.3.1 PERSONAL HYGIENE**

All members must maintain proper personal hygiene. Examples of improper personal hygiene include, but are not limited to, dirty fingernails, bad breath, body odor and dirty or unkempt hair. Any member who has a condition due to a protected category (e.g., race, physical disability) which affects any aspect of personal hygiene covered by this policy may qualify for an accommodation and should report any need for an accommodation to a supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

##### **1028.3.2 HAIR**

The hairstyle of all members shall be neat in appearance. Hair must be no longer than the horizontal level of the bottom of the uniform patch when the member is standing erect. Hairstyles that extend below the top edge of the uniform collar should be secured in a tightly wrapped braid or ponytail.

##### **1028.3.3 MUSTACHES**

A short and neatly trimmed mustache may be worn. Mustaches shall not extend more than one (1) inch below the corners of the mouth or beyond the natural hairline of the upper lip.

##### **1028.3.4 COSMETICS**

Members are permitted to wear cosmetics of conservative color and amount.

##### **1028.3.5 FINGERNAILS**

Fingernails extending beyond the tip of the finger can pose a safety hazard to members working in the field. For this reason, fingernails shall be trimmed so that no point of the nail extends beyond the tip of the finger.

##### **1028.3.6 JEWELRY AND ACCESSORIES**

No jewelry or personal ornaments shall be worn by members on-duty on any part of the uniform or equipment, except those authorized within this manual. Members should be mindful of wearing jewelry that can become snagged or caught during performance of fire suppression duties.

- Necklaces or jewelry, worn around the neck, shall not be visible above the shirt collar.
- It is recommended that members refrain from wearing rings while assigned to suppression.

#### **1028.4 TATTOOS**

While on duty, tattoos will only be displayed on the arms and legs while in uniform. No other visible tattoos are authorized. The display of ANY unprofessional or offensive tattoo or brand regardless of its location on the body, while members are in uniform is prohibited. Any tattoo deemed to be

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inappropriate / unprofessional, as determined at the sole discretion of the Fire Chief, must also be covered. Inappropriate / unprofessional may include, but is not limited to, marks that exhibit or advocate discrimination against sex, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, age (40 and over), physical or mental disability or medical condition, religion, marital status or that promote or express gang, supremacist or extremist group affiliation, drug use, nudity, violence, vulgar language, sexually explicit acts or other obscene material.

No tattoos are allowed on the hands (below the wrist), or above the clavicle on the head, neck, face or scalp.

Exceptions: Permanent makeup on the face and wedding band / ring tattoo on the ring finger.

#### **1028.5 BODY PIERCING OR ALTERATION**

Except for a single stud pierced earring worn in the lobe of each ear, no body piercing shall be visible while any member is on-duty or representing the Department in any official capacity.

Alteration to any area of the body that is visible in any authorized uniform or attire, that is a deviation from normal anatomical features and is not medically required is prohibited. Such body alteration includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Tongue splitting or piercing.
- (b) The complete or trans-dermal implantation of any material other than hair replacement.
- (c) Abnormal shaping of the ears, eyes, nose or teeth.
- (d) Branding or scarification.